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Contemporary Spanish and Spanish American Fiction in English: Tropes of Fidelity in the Translation of Titles

by Michael S. Doyle

For the reader, a book begins with its title. On a jacket or cover it can be an invitation, an enticement, a promise of things to come. For the library or bookstore browser it is a crooked finger and a voice that whispers from a shelf, "Pssst, over here." Or it can fail to capture one's fancy and instead be a dis-invitation, a lure or bait that is rejected outright. In this sense, books *are* often judged by their covers, particularly fiction. A title, of course, is also a literary convention that serves to orient the reader as to the nature of the book itself—its content, tone, discourse, genre. As such, it is a primary element used by literary critics in the creation and furtherance of the discourses of literary history, the sociology of literature, and the history and sociology of criticism itself. Titles become the raw material of classification, they serve as labels or signposts, or in some instances as scalps collected in a professional's dossier. To these ends, even the untitled work is often assigned a title or number in order to facilitate identification and taxonomy. For the author and translator—the original and the other author—the creation of a new title for a published work is physical proof that new literary space has been created to accommodate the work itself. Also, unlike the reader for whom the title is a beginning point, for the authors of a work it is often enough where the book ends, it is the last feature to be added to the text that has been written. Yet it becomes one of the main items which elbows aside already extant index cards and computer entries (author, subject, title) in order to make room for a new addition, which must also be housed in the critical, historical, and sociological discourses above, more new space. Finally, and to bring us back to the bookstore browser, titles are also the convention through which the authors themselves participate in the information (publicity) function of marketing: titles are their most visible appeal to the reader qua consumer. A writer hopes that his or her title will arouse the literary consumer's interest, which is what editors and publishers are banking on, that the small neon sign on the spine of a book will lead to intellectual consumption through commercial transaction.

If the title is a translated title, the considerations that go into its selection take on a new twist, they are compounded, although its functions remain the same. The words and their sounds and often the syntax must be changed from those in the original. The effect of the cross-cultural shift must be measured since what appeared in another language, bound by the cultural discourse of that

language, must now be re-made to fit within the cultural parameters of the new language. In this sense, good literary translation is always far more than simple semantic transfer, it is culturally re-contextualized semantic transfer, inevitable cultural "refraction" (to borrow from André Lefevere a most useful term in coping with translation [see suggested articles in Works Consulted]), semiotic transfer in a broader sense. For the translation of Spanish and Spanish American fiction into English, the results of these considerations are not always as dramatic in their difference from the original as they might be were the language further removed linguistically and culturally from the Western and European tradition that both English and Spanish share. Yet there are instances where what works in one language, Spanish, completely fails in the other, English. This is why the bookstore browser who is familiar with both languages will occasionally encounter a novel or collection of short stories in English whose title he cannot match back to the Spanish original, even though he or she is familiar with the works of the original author. A change has been made, so dramatic that it renders the comfort of immediate identification difficult if not impossible. The new author in English has taken liberties (often necessary, as we shall see) and departed from the narrow path of literal rendition. As I review some of the recent titles of contemporary Spanish and Spanish American fiction in translation into English, I shall lead up to this liberal or re-creative strategy by first considering the two seemingly easier strategies of literal or near-literal translation.

Burton Raffel has recently reminded us, in his book *The Art of Translating Poetry*, that "So-called literal translation . . . is on the face of it literally impossible. Exact linguistic equivalents are by definition nonexistent" (11). The reasons he gives for this rightful reminder are that:

1. No two languages having the same phonology, it is impossible to re-create the sounds of a work composed in one language in another language.
2. No two languages having the same syntactic structures, it is impossible to re-create the syntax of a work composed in one language in another language.
3. No two languages having the same vocabulary, it is impossible to re-create the vocabulary of a work composed in one language in another language. (12)

The word "literal," then, in talking about translation, is no more than a heuristic device, yet I think a successful and necessary one because it is such an ingrained term in the discourse of translation theory. Although it must now be taken with a great grain of salt, and be read or thought about in quotations, it does help to provide a distinction along the range of possibilities bounded on one end by reproduction word for word ("literal") and on the other by "liberal," "free," or "creative" translation. Along the scale of "approximation" in translation, which Raffel prescribes as the only "valid standard" remaining (29), "literal" has its place; it is a functional point of departure.

Beginning, then, with literal translations of titles from Spanish and Spanish American fiction, those which in English reproduce exactly the title in Spanish, we see several categories into which they fall: 1. the title as the name of a character; 2. the title as a foreign word or phrase used in Spanish (which the original author did not translate into Spanish) which is then retained in English; and 3. the title as a word or phrase in Spanish which is retained in English.

Borges's *Evaristo Carriego* ("menos documental que imaginativo," 10), following the tradition of *Madame Bovary* and *Anna Karenina*, is an example of the first category, in which the new title in English is one and the same as that in the original, the name of the protagonist. The name "Evaristo Carriego," if it is to be used as the translated title, cannot be translated into English. It is absolutely untranslatable, just as "Kendrick Johnson" would be from English to Spanish. It must stand on its own, a monolith to untranslatability.

Examples of the second category are Goytisolo's *Makbara* and Fuentes's *Terra Nostra*, which both authors let stand in the Spanish "original" in their own original languages, Arabic and Latin. Neither author translated his title into Spanish—"makbara" into "cementerio" and "terra nostra" into "tierra nuestra"—so the translator into English, whose job it is to "echo the effect in the original" (Raffel, 29), has done well in retaining the original to that effect. One of the translator's main responsibilities is to attempt to write in English what the original author would (or might well) have written had his or her language been English. It is an exercise in Romantic hermeneutics, which in this case has been facilitated by the strategy of the original author. *Makbara* and *Terra Nostra* remain as exotic and exciting to the English eye and ear as they are to the Spanish.

The third category is exemplified by titles such as *Extramuros*, *Pubis angelical*, *Gazapo*, and *Ficciones* (by Fernández Santos, Puig, Sainz, and Borges). *Extramuros* and *Pubis angelical* remind one of the latinizing effect retained above by Carlos Fuentes in *Terra Nostra*, particularly Puig's title. Again, they strike the English eye and ear as exotic, echoes of a time remote or subtle transgressions into forbidden zones (an invitation made palatable in the second title through its thinly veiled euphemism). *Pubis Angelical* reads equally well in both Spanish and English (one has only to pronounce the title aloud in English to

appreciate its Latin sound—in fact, the English version is perhaps more successful than the Spanish in this sense). *Extramuros* could be translated literally as "outside the city," "beyond the walls," or perhaps even "AWOL" (if a sort of popular etymology were created). But the effect would be to militarize the suggestiveness of the title, or remind one of *Escape from Alcatraz*, both totally inappropriate cultural re-contextualizations. *Gazapo*, as the inside flap of the novel's jacket explains, is a redolent word in Spanish. It can mean: "1. Young rabbit. 2. Sly, astute man (colloquial). 3. A big lie, a whopper. 4. Something cacophonous or indecent or vulgar." It is impossible to translate this multivalency into a single word in English. Given this instance of untranslatability (any rendition will be too reductive), the strategy has been to retain the original Spanish title, introducing its richness of primary and secondary meanings in a preliminary series of definitions to the reader in English (the technique of the inside flap definition is repeated again on a page prior to the reader's reaching page one of the novel). The assumption seems to be that the reader in English, equipped now with a shopping list of definitions for the word "gazapo," will bear all this in mind as the reading proceeds. *Ficciones* by Borges is again a perfect "literal" translation because on the face of it, it is no translation at all. It could have been translated as *Fictions*, but the special twist and attraction of the strange would be demolished. The word "fictions" is immediately identifiable beneath and behind the word "ficciones," with the added feature that in English the reader's horizon of expectations is shocked and broadened by the strange but recognizable spelling of the word in an English title.

"Ficciones" becomes more than just "fictions," it takes on a new shine and allure when spelled "ficciones." It breathes new life into the commonplace, and if any translation is to be achieved, the translator leaves this to the reader, who now participates (certainly but probably unwittingly) in part of the excitement of the translation process. In a word, reader and translator collapse into one another and become two names for the very same activity—that of translation.

Near-literal translations are by far the most numerous encountered. They occur when the language—primarily the semantic content, although often enough the syntactic element as well—of the original lends itself to a form of literal, *mot à mot* carrying across. In short, the wording of the original Spanish will work in English; it requires little or no tampering. Examples are: *The Book of Sand* (*El libro de arena*) and *Other Inquisitions* (*Otras Inquisiciones*) by Borges; *Hopscotch* (*Rayuela*) and *Around the Day in Eighty Worlds* (*La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos*) by Cortázar; *This Sunday* (*Este domingo*) and *The Obscene Bird of Night* (*El obsceno pájaro de la noche*) by Donoso; *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*) and *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (*El otoño del patriarca*) by García Márquez; *The Lost Steps* (*Los pasos perdidos*) and *The Kingdom of this World* (*El reino de este mundo*) by Carpentier; *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (*La muerte de Artemio Cruz*) and *The Hydra Head* (*La cabeza de la hidra*) by Fuentes; *The Green House* (*La casa*

verde), *Conversation in the Cathedral* (*Conversación en la catedral*), and *Who Killed Palomino Molero?* (*¿Quién mató a Palomino Molero?*) by Vargas Llosa; *The Princess of the Iron Palace* (*La princesa del palacio de hierro*) by Sainz; *The House of the Spirits* (*La casa de los espíritus*) by Isabel Allende; *A Meditation* (*Una meditación*) by Benet; *The Path* (*El camino*) by Delibes; *Marks of Identity* (*Señas de identidad*) and *Juan the Landless* (*Juan sin tierra*) by Goytisolo; *The Family of Pascual Duarte* (*La familia de Pascual Duarte*) and *The Hive* (*La colmena*) by Cela; and *The Back Room* (*El cuarto de atrás*) by Martín Gaité. In these instances the translators have determined that a word for word semantic translation into English is appropriate. It succeeds in suggesting, hinting at, or echoing the effect in the original language (Raffel, 29). On the face of it, there is no semantic betrayal of the original, although the English versions certainly have a different musicality, cultural connotations, and often a different syntax, as in the simple example provided by the last title listed above, *The Back Room*, which in English does not match the "literal" Spanish syntax of "the room in or out back." Despite these inevitable shortcomings, they do succeed at a fundamental semantic level, and they would be good, marketable titles in English had they originally been written in this language.

In some cases of near-literal translation, other subtle changes have been wrought by the translator. Examples are *The Old Gringo* (*Gringo viejo*) and *The Good Conscience* (*Las buenas conciencias*) by Fuentes. An article has been added to the first title, which buffs the colloquial sound of "old gringo." In Spanish a stylistic option is to omit the article in titles or dictionary entries (definitions of words) without necessarily suggesting a colloquial quality. The effect is that, although the article is missing in print, it is often supplied by the reader's eyes as in a culturally programmed linguistic fill-in-the-blank exercise, which results in a Spanish reading of *Gringo viejo* as *(El) Gringo viejo*. The plural form of the second Spanish title, *Las buenas conciencias*, is made singular, which facilitates pronunciation in English, "the good consciences" being an alliterative mouthful. Other titles in which similar subtle changes have been made in English are *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (*El beso de la mujer araña*) by Puig, *A Change of Skin* (*Cambio de piel*) by Fuentes, *Love in the Time of Cholera* (*El amor en los tiempos del cólera*) by García Márquez, and *Of Love and Shadows* (*De amor y sombra*) by Allende.

In numerous other instances the translator has added the phrase "and Other Stories" to the English title: *El Aleph* (Borges) becomes *The Aleph and Other Stories*; *La hojarasca* (García Márquez) becomes *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*; *El llano en llamas* (Rulfo) becomes *The Burning Plain and Other Stories*; and *Los cachorros* (Vargas Llosa) becomes *The Cubs and Other Stories*. Whether it was the translator's decision or not to make this addition (it may have been the editor's or publisher's, those who reserve the right to make such final decisions), the English translation identifies the genre for the reader whereas the Spanish title does not. In the case of Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*, the En-

glish confirms it completely: *Pedro Páramo: A Novel of Mexico*.

Yet in other cases the translated title shortens the Spanish original, rather than adding to it. *Cronopios and Famas* is the new version of Cortázar's *Historias de cronopios y famas* and *Count Julian* becomes the title of Goytisolo's *La reivindicación del conde don Julián*. Cortázar's title would work well enough in English in its entirety, perhaps something along the lines of *Tales of Cronopios and Famas* or *Stories of Cronopios and Famas*, but a decision was made to make the bilingual version as succinct as possible, which I think in this case does serve somewhat to heighten the reader's (the bookstore browser's) curiosity to pick up the book in order "to see more what this is about." To have translated Goytisolo's novel as "The Vindication of Count Julian" would also have worked quite well, as readers know that vengeance always makes for good reading.

There are also titles in English in which the new, single volume is harvested from more than one title in Spanish. Two examples are Cortázar's *A Change of Light and Other Stories* (drawn from *Octaedro* and *Alguien que anda por ahí*) and *Burnt Water: Stories* by Carlos Fuentes (created from *Cantar de ciegos* and *Chac Mool y otros cuentos*). With this, however, we are quite obviously moving farther away from what can be properly considered literal or near-literal translation.

As we move further along the spectrum of the translation process from literal to liberal or free, we discover greater differences between the English rendition and the Spanish original. Cortázar's *Los premios*, literally "the prizes/awards/rewards," becomes *The Winners*, which literally translates back into Spanish as "los premiados, los ganadores." Puig's *La traición de Rita Hayworth* (literally "the treason/traachery/betrayal of Rita Hayworth" or "Rita Hayworth's treason/traachery/betrayal") becomes *Betrayed by Rita Hayworth*, which would literally backtranslate as "traicionado por Rita Hayworth." Fuentes's *Una familia lejana* (literally "a distant family") appears in English as *Distant Relations*, which again would re-translate differently from the original title, becoming now "relaciones/parientes distantes." **Benet's *Volverás a Región* ("you will/shall return to Region") becomes the more ambiguous, bilingual *Return to Región*, which can be read as either a command or prophesy (matching the tone of the Spanish original) or simply as a noun construction (as in somebody's memoirs about a return to some location), the latter of which would re-translate as "la vuelta a Región."**

In an interesting example where on the surface of it a translation seems to be near-literal rather than literal, Arabal's *La torre herida por el rayo* ("The tower wounded by the lightning") becomes *The Tower Struck by Lightning*, which literally backtranslates as something along the lines of "la torre en que cayó un/el rayo." The wound alluded to in the Spanish title, which would be the result of lightning striking in both languages, has been omitted in English in favor of the more idiomatic "struck," which is precisely how the English language expresses what

lightning does—it strikes. In this case, however, it is interesting to note that the wording in both the original and the translation, seemingly non-idiomatic in each language, was indeed idiomatic within the context of the tarot cards, a contextual motif from which the title in Spanish was drawn. Translator Anthony Kerrigan explained to me in San Diego (April 15, 1989) that the tarot card reads “La torre herida por el rayo” in Spanish and “The Tower Struck by Lightning” in English, such that a more poetic, literal rendition as “The Tower Wounded by Lightning” would have been in effect a cultural mis-translation, a transgression against an already-given discourse in English.

With this, both in appearance and in fact, one begins to arrive at the far end of the spectrum, at the other extreme from the different variants of literal translation, to where titles in English depart so dramatically from the Spanish original that the reader (even an informed one at times) cannot suspect what the original title must have been, given the English. A translator usually departs from the original in this manner when he or she can find no satisfactory “literal” solution, not even a fitting semantic one, in English. The discovery, the frustration, is often that what worked in Spanish simply will not work as well or at all in English. This occurs because of “the specific constraints of language” and “the constraints of specific languages,” which Burton Raffel has so aptly pointed out. The translator cannot literally carry across effectively in these instances; he or she must create, extemporize, let go of the wording in the original title. A wider path must be sought to what is usually seen as the narrow, servile path of the translation process. Faithfulness as the strict adherence to the original version must transcend the constraints of the “*verbatim ac litteratum*” tenet (“word for word and letter for letter”). The new author in English must seek fidelity elsewhere, in different ways and at different levels. His or her judgment, calculated as well as intuitive, is called into play in a venture that editors, publishers, critics, and readers should learn to acknowledge, appreciate, and applaud. Success, even in so small a matter as a title, now must depend on insight, imagination, and “courage,” to borrow from Minas Savvas’s reflections on translation in which he juxtaposes the traditional modesty ascribed to translation with a prescriptive call to courage. Translation is not really a modest gesture, rather a courageously immodest enrichment of the transnational literary tradition of world literature.

In some instances the solution to the search for the most suitable and salable title in English is provided by the Spanish text itself. Borges’s *Dreamtigers*, for example, appears in Spanish as *El hacedor*. There are no “dreams” or “tigers” in these two Spanish words. They translate simply as “the creator/maker/doer.” But it is a special maker or creator that is involved: a creator or re-creator of dreams in which the motif of the tiger figures prominently as the poet Borges fills the shape of his dreaming with the memories, tropes, symbolism, and mythology of the “tiger,” as he does in the poem “El otro tigre”

(“The Other Tiger”), contained in *El hacedor*. Further, and representing the solution for the translators, the third entry (sketch) in *El hacedor* is itself entitled “Dreamtigers,” published in English in the Spanish edition. Thus the movement from *El hacedor* to “the creator/maker” and on to *Dreamtigers* is perfectly appropriate. Two motifs are collapsed into one, the dream and the tiger—dreamtigers—in a manner that the Spanish language will not allow. Unlike English, idiomatic Spanish will not permit a noun to function as an adjective, as in “cotton shirt” or “dreamtigers,” which must be expressed as “camisa de algodón” or “sueños con/de tigres.” To Borges’s lifelong obsession with dreams he has now added his autobiographical and philosophical secret of the “tiger.” By using a subtitle, a title within a title, one already given in English by the Argentine author, the translators of *El hacedor* have had to travel but a short distance in order to provide an English-language title more specific, appropriate, suggestive, and poetic than the generality of “the creator” or “the maker.” It has been tailored by the translators to the book at hand, contextualized by the very pages being translated. As a title, “the creator” or “the maker” would have been appropriate also, but would have represented a broader, vaguer, and more Biblical-sounding solution than the intratextual and contextual exactitude provided by *Dreamtigers*. Something is lost but something is gained, as is inevitably the case with translation. The translation was, in a sense, ready-made, as it was similarly in the translation of the title to Neruda’s poem “Walking Around,” which Neruda also put in English in the original Spanish edition. What remained was for the translators to seize on this solution, which they did.

Other titles in which a subtitle or motif in the Spanish original subsequently becomes the title of the English translation are Matute’s *Primera memoria* (literally “first memory/memoir”), Puig’s *Boquitas pintadas* (“little painted mouths”), Delibes’s *Parábola del naufrago* (“parable of the shipwrecked person/castaway”), and Vargas Llosa’s *La ciudad y los perros* (“the city and the dogs”). In the case of Matute, *Primera memoria* was translated as *School of the Sun* (in the United States) and *Awakening* (in England.) The American title is derived nearly literally from the subtitle of the second part of the novel in Spanish, “La escuela del sol.” “School of the Sun” is much more suggestive of the poetic quality of Matute’s novel than would be “first memory/memoir,” which falls short doubly in that it does not even succeed at correctly suggesting the genre of the work. Indeed, “Escuela del sol” would have worked nicely as the title in Spanish, whereas “first memory” does not work at all in English. The sun plays a prominent role in the novel: it is a searing, August-September sun that bears witness to the protagonist’s loss of innocence. It is a spotlight focused by Matute on the end of childhood for her protagonist and on that threshold point that marks her awakening into the sordid world of adulthood. It is precisely this theme of transition that is captured so nicely in the English translation of the title as *Awakening*.

Puig's novel *Boquitas pintadas* appears in English as *Heartbreak Tango: A Serial*. The title in Spanish is taken from an epigraph (a quotation of tango lyrics) to the "Tercera Entrega" ("third installment/episode" for a serialized novel): "Deliciosas criatura perfumadas, quiero el beso de sus *boquitas pintadas*" (emphasis mine). The English-language author follows the lead provided by the original author and in turn takes for her title a phrase from another epigraph, that of the "Fourth Episode" in the English version: "My obsession, *heartbreak tango* (emphasis mine), plunged my soul to deepest sin, as the music of that tango set my poor heart all a-spin." Both novels draw their titles from epigraphs, but from those belonging to different chapters, installments, or episodes. It is interesting to note that the epigraphs, aside from being from different chapters, are seldom taken from the same source in English as they are in the Spanish; those in *Heartbreak Tango: A Serial* do not match those which appear in *Boquitas pintadas*. Since the translator, Suzanne Jill Levine, is known for having worked closely with several of the authors she has translated (not only Puig, but also Cabrera Infante, Cortázar, and Fuentes), one assumes correctly that the different epigraphs in English are the result of a collaborative venture between her and Puig, a venture that goes beyond translation into the realm of intentional substitution, re-creation, and re-writing either with the author's consent or at his insistence.

That this has indeed been the case in Puig's *Boquitas pintadas* has been documented recently by Levine in her chapter "From 'Little Painted Lips' to *Heartbreak Tango*" (in *The Art of Translation*, Northeastern University Press, 1989). Since, as Levine points out, "The translation responds not only to the author's context . . . but, most urgently, to its potential reader," the translation of the title had to provide a creative solution to the "contextual constraints" of Puig's original novel and title (31 and 45). A fitting, cross-cultural re-contextualization of the Argentine title was required in English. Levine explains that:

The solution we finally came up with was to translate some tango lyrics that were essential to the plot, but to substitute at least half of the epigraph quotation with either taglines from Hollywood films or Argentine radio commercials (originally based, most probably, on Madison Avenue inventions). That is, artifacts relevant to the original context but which rang a funny, familiar, exaggerated bell for American readers (39).

This translation strategy reflects how the "inter- and contextual relationships change" (41) or must often be re-forged in translated literature. A literal translation as "little painted mouths," while suggestive of a serialized popular novel or a soap opera, would have lacked the cultural and contextual specificity and suggestiveness of "Heartbreak Tango." The title *Heartbreak Tango: A serial* identifies its special genre for the reader; it makes the heartbreak of the Hollywood or American TV serial or

soap opera sound Argentine through the word "tango"; and "tango" wraps back around itself into the very nature of serials or soap operas because heartbreak is the stuff of which tangos too are so often made ("the dark side of love: seduction and abandonment, betrayal, the death of a lover" [38]). A popular American mythology, that of Hollywood and television, has been partially and felicitously substituted for the Argentine mythology of the tango in a desire to strike the right cultural nerve of a new and different readership.

Delibes's novel *Parábola del naufrago* is translated as *The Hedge*. Again, a literal translation would be "parable of the shipwrecked person/castaway." No "hedge" appears in the Spanish title, and the new English title would retranslate back into Spanish as "el seto (vivo)" or even as "hedge" in a financial sense, "protección/operaciones de bolsa compensatorias." Although the novel is a scathing critique of the capitalist society in which the emasculated protagonist, jacintosanjósé (even the capital letters in his name are cut off), becomes a shipwrecked person, a castaway, the second context (the financial one) of the word "hedge" is not the one from which the title in English is drawn. The "hedge" is a motif in the novel, a hedgerow grown wild, hemming in its victim, jacintosanjósé, trapping him further within the consumer society maze in which he is a castaway, a person adrift, a reject. Perhaps *Parábola del naufrago* would have worked in English as "Parable of a Castaway" or "The Castaway's Parable," or even "Parable of a Shipwrecked Man." But this far more cumbersome literal path was not chosen; instead, a motif in the Spanish edition became the new title of the new novel in English.

Vargas Llosa's milestone novel, *La ciudad y los perros*, appeared in English as *The Time of the Hero*. The Spanish title translated literally as "the city and the dogs," which in English immediately suggests something or some place "gone to the dogs." Or it might strike a chord with something written by or for the S.P.C.A., perhaps a report on the plight of dogs in the city. But the novel is about another plight, that of young cadets at the military academy Leoncio Prado in Lima, Peru. The new title in English, *The Time of the Hero*, ironically alludes to the fact that in a setting intended to produce heroes, the result is that the brutality and false virility championed as heroic qualities in young men lead only to their dehumanization, as the jacket of the Spanish original explains. Would-be heroes are not produced, they are mockingly deconstructed by Vargas Llosa. Aside from the above, a literal rendition into English involving "dogs" and "city" can in no way match the power and prestige already attained by the original title in Spanish. Instead, in attempting to create a similar new literary space for itself through a literal rendition into English, it would run the risk of cross-cultural trivialization—which the word "hero" avoids—of one of the most important works to emerge from Spanish America in the 1960s.

Other examples of titles in English that are dramatically different from the original Spanish title are: *Hell Has No Limits* (Donoso, *El lugar sin límites*, literally "the place

without limits"); *Three Trapped Tigers* and *Infante's Inferno* (Cabrera Infante, *Tres tristes tigres* and *La Habana para un infante difunto*, literally "three sad tigers" and "Havana for a dead/defunct prince/infant"); *Where the Air Is Clear* (Fuentes, *La región más transparente*, literally "the most transparent region"); *The Young Assassins* and *Children of Chaos* (Goytisolo, *Juegos de manos* and *Duelo en el paraíso*, literally "hand games/sleights of hand" and "duel/sorrow/grief/affliction in paradise"); *Explosion in a Cathedral* (Carpentier, *El siglo de las luces*, literally "the Age of Enlightenment"); and *The Time of the Doves* (Mercè Rodoreda, from the Catalan *La Plaça del Diamant*, literally "Diamond Square"). In each instance the author in English decided that a literal or near-literal rendition simply would not work. A new and different literary space had to be created, perhaps one that would more easily and appropriately accommodate the new work within the literary tradition of the English language. As in the cases involving Matute, Puig, Delibes, and Vargas Llosa, the translators resorted to strategies that stretch the "verbatim ac litteratum" principle to the farthest end of the translation process spectrum.

The titles of recent Spanish and Spanish American fiction in translation cover the full spectrum of the translation process from literal to near-literal to liberal or free translation. At one extreme, which we may consider the point of departure, translators are able to retain the title just as it was in the original Spanish. This makes it appear that no translation at all has taken place, but what actually occurs is that the translator has slyly delegated this activity to the reader. Then, working their way along the gamut of translation possibilities and strategies, the translators eventually arrive at titles that in English, on the surface of it, bear little or no resemblance to the original. At this extreme it appears that faithfulness in translation has been abandoned, that the translator has lost sight of his or her "secondary and derivative" function, which is to match in good, idiomatic, literary English the language of the original. In sum, to attempt to write in English the very words that the Spanish or Spanish American author might have written had he or she been writing in English instead of Spanish.

But what becomes clear is that faithfulness is still operative even in translations of titles where the "verbatim ac litteratum" principle is invisible. There are different levels of fidelity, different planes and types—different tropes—that transcend the still widely held mechanical misconception that translation is to be a literal, word for word, exact, and strictly undeviating literary activity. Quite obviously, translation can, should, and at times must attain to other notions of faithfulness, to a fidelity to the spirit of a title—perhaps better epitomized by a subtitle or motif in English—rather than to the letter of the original. Often this tactic is required because of "the specific constraints of language" and "the constraints of specific languages." On other occasions it owes itself to the different cultural contextualization required by a new readership. What works well in Spanish cannot always be carried over with literal success into English. When

the translator takes courage and acknowledges this fact and acts upon it, the result in English is often a title that is far superior to what would have been the consequence of having followed the narrower path. Indeed, the new and different title in English is perhaps far closer to the very title that the original author might have chosen had he or she been writing the new, yet the same, book in English.

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